

TOWN OF PLYMOUTH MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 10, 2022 –VIA ZOOM
7:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Vershumn Hawkins – 7:00 p.m.

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees via ZOOM. Mayor Hawkins apologized for the restrictive meeting due to the increase in COVID cases. Mayor Hawkins then asked the Town Clerk to proceed with a Roll Call:

| PRESENT | ABSENT | COUNCILMEMBER |
|---------|--------|-----------------------|
| X | | Councilwoman Brooks |
| | X | Councilman Arnold |
| X | | Councilwoman Byers |
| X | | Councilwoman Teel |
| X | | Councilwoman Williams |
| | X | Councilman Wobbleton |
| X | | Mayor Hawkins |

The opening prayer was offered by Councilwoman Teel, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Hawkins.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Hawkins asked the Council if they had any changes to the agenda. There being no changes, Councilwoman Teel made a motion to approve the agenda with a second by Councilwoman Williams. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed 5-0.

III. PUBLIC HEARING - None

IV. PRESENTATIONS TO COUNCIL - None

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Hawkins asked the Clerk if she had been contacted by any citizens to request to speak to Council. The Clerk responded that she received a request from Karen Clay-Respass to read a comment for the record as Ms. Clay-Respass could not access the meeting via ZOOM. The Clerk read the attached statement as requested.

VI. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. Financial – The Finance Officer presented the report for the period ending December 31, 2021:

| | Budgeted | Expenses | Variance |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| General Fund (10) | \$3,115,636.00 | \$1,388,791.67 | \$1,726,844.45 |
| Water Fund (61) | \$1,417,219.00 | \$729,253.01 | \$687,965.99 |
| Sewer Fund (62) | \$1,009,103.00 | \$481,801.77 | \$527,301.63 |
| Solid Waste Fund (66) | \$582,500.00 | \$279,312.76 | \$303,187.24 |
| Stormwater Fund (67) | \$110,000.00 | \$49,911.18 | \$60,088.82 |

2. Tax/Utility Collections. Finance Officer Wallace presented the report in Ms. Nadine Moore's absence as follows: 1418 utility bills were mailed on December 23, 2021 with a due date of January 17, 2022. The amount billed was \$282,783.48. 1300 payments were received for a total of \$214,168.47. 72% of customers paid on time and 28% did not. 306 payments were received for property and vehicle taxes in the amount of \$323,998.96. Delinquent tax payments covering the period of 2015 – 2020 were in the amount of \$280,305.91.

NOTE: Councilman Wobbleton connected to the meeting during the Tax/Utility Report.

3. The Director of Public Works reported:

- On-going projects: WWTP Renovation timeline: Installation has started on Grit Removal Lift Station. CDBG: A temporary brine tank has been set-up until the new tank is installed. The SCADA server installation is 80% complete. Water tower/wells: The heat strips and the sensors for the water tower on East Main Street are being installed. AIA Water Line: The engineer is reviewing the draft report for corrections, after which the report will be given to the Interim Town Manager and the Public Works Director to approve and then presented to the Town Council. Public Works Director Wright reported that the project is well ahead of schedule. Domtar Restrooms: The Town is still waiting for approval from Domtar Trustees. HMGP (FEMA) – Generators: Close out is still in process. Paperwork has been submitted to FEMA for reimbursement. Updates for Wilson Street Park

and a Convenience Site will be given later in the meeting. Public Works Director Wright then reported that he is waiting for the cold weather to subside before the sidewalks are fixed on the west end of Water Street. The signage for schools is scheduled to be installed within the next three weeks. Public Works Director Wright then spoke about digging out the ditches on Golf Road and reported that he met with Mr. Denton, a beaver removal expert, about the issues with the five beaver dams located in that area, and the use of small explosives to get rid of the dams. Mayor Pro Tempore Brooks asked Public Works Director Wright about how to resolve the flooding that adversely affects stores on Washington Street after heavy rains. He reported that he contacted the Department of Transportation and representatives came. Together they checked the catch basins, manholes and cleaned out blockages.

Mayor Hawkins asked for a consensus from the Council in regard to giving Interim Town Manager Layton and Public Works Director approval regarding clearing up the beaver dams. There being no objection, instructions were given to make sound decisions in regard to this issue.

- Streets:
 - Repaired sidewalk sections at the east end of downtown
 - School signs will be installed by the end of January
- Building & Grounds:
 - Repaired Window at Maritime Museum
 - Edged sidewalks around Town
- Water: Repaired leaks:
 - 213 Adams
- Sewer: Cleared out blockages:
 - 65 Mackeys Road
 - 305 Winesett Circle
 - 333 West Avenue (twice)
 - 101 Harvey Court
 - 529 Monroe Street (twice)
 - 202A Sterling Drive
 - 907 Wilson Street
 - 203 Brinkley Place
 - 104 Luvera Street
 - 240 Hwy 64W
 - 327 Wilson Street
 - Replaced sewer pipe to main line at 104 Luvera Street
- Pump Stations:
 - No reported activity
- Sanitation
 - Picked up trash piles around Town

4. Code Enforcement Officer Dennis Brown reported:

- Move Outs – Three move outs. One landlord paid the fees the Town for the pick-up. No pending move outs.
- Dilapidated Houses – Two dilapidated properties are in the process of demolition. One property is located at 709 Madison Street and the other at 305 Fourth Street.
- Abandoned Vehicles – Four notices were sent out and four vehicles have been removed. Zero vehicles had to be towed.
- Grass and Weed Nuisance – Two complaints were received with one positive response. One complaint is still under investigation.
- House Nuisance – Six complaints were received. After investigation, the property managers and homeowners abated the nuisances.
- Ordinance Complaints – Five complaints were received, and two are still under investigation.

Councilwoman Teel stated that she saw that a trailer on Wilson Street had been boarded up rather than torn down and asked for the reason. Code Enforcement Officer Brown reported that he instructed the owner to board it up until it was torn down for safety purposes. He further reported that the owner had started working on some of the trailers in the back of the properties. Questions were raised as to why work was being performed on the back of the properties instead of the front.

Mayor Hawkins commented on Wilson Street and Hannah Park. He stated that there has been great concern with this ongoing nuisance issue and asked that Code Enforcement Officer Brown get together with Interim Town Manager Layton and Attorney Isenberg and come up with an action plan to expeditiously resolve the matter and bring it to next month's Council meeting.

5. Police Department – Chief Williams gave an update regarding the status of three applicants for the Department. He also reported that the contract for the cameras has been finalized. The next step will be meeting with the manufacturing engineer to discuss locations. Chief Williams stated that he also reached out to Dominion Power regarding the installation process. He further reported that the Plymouth Housing Authority Director informed him that their cameras will be installed within the next couple of weeks.
6. Fire Department – Jeff Arnold reported on behalf of Chief Timothy Miller who was not able to attend the meeting due to his work schedule. Mr. Arnold reported that the Department is waiting for the State to release paperwork so that the house on Fourth Street can be burned. There is a meeting scheduled

with a representative from the Department of Insurance to prepare for the upcoming ISO inspection.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda contained:

- A. Approval of Minutes from December 13, 2021, Council Meeting
- B. Approval of 2022 Annual Calendar
- C. Approval of Resolution 2022-01 a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Plymouth, North Carolina, Authorizing Participation in the North Carolina Local Government Debt Setoff Program

A motion was made by Councilwoman Teel to approve the Consent Agenda, with a second by Councilwoman Byers. A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed 5-0.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON WILSON STREET PARK

Mayor Hawkins asked Interim Town Manager Layton to address this issue. Interim Town Manager Layton reported that due to the recent holidays, the meeting with Councilwoman Williams, Councilman Wobbleton, and Public Works Director Wright will need to be rescheduled. Mayor Pro Tempore Brooks asked that since Interim Town Manager Layton reported that Options 1 and 2 were cost prohibitive, it be taken into consideration that the project design be broken into phases, perhaps over a two to three year span, so the proper drainage can be installed rather than spending the amount of money it would take for Option 3, as Option 3 does not include drainage. After further discussion, Interim Town Manager Layton stated that hybrid options can be conceptualized and discussed at the upcoming meeting when it is rescheduled.

B. UPDATE ON PROPOSED CONVENIENCE SITE

Mayor Hawkins asked Interim Town Manager Layton to address this project. He presented options for a location and the circumstances under which the Town might acquire one. He also discussed the possibility of obtaining Grant funds from the State. Interim Town Manager Layton asked if the Council would give him direction as to whether or not to continue to pursue the project and if Council is comfortable for staff to begin to draft a grant application for the Council's approval at the next meeting. Mayor Pro Tempore Brooks spoke to her concern for locating a convenience site near a residential area. After further discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to have Interim Town Manager Layton continue discussions with Southern Bank because they own property at one or two of the locations being considered.

C. APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Interim Town Manager Layton reported that Attorney Isenberg researched the issue of whether or not a sitting Councilmember can serve on the Board of Adjustments. Attorney Isenberg stated that she evaluated the issue and determined that it would not be proper for a sitting Councilmember to also sit on the Board of Adjustments as it would conflict with separation of powers. Interim Town Manager Layton also reported that he attended a meeting of the PDP earlier in the evening and announced that the Town is attempting to fill BOA positions. He stated that received positive feed back from three people that expressed interest. Mayor Pro Tempore Brooks asked if the number of members could be reduced. Interim Town Manager Layton stated that the Town ordinance for the BOA would need to be modified and explained that the ordinance was based on best practices. Attorney Isenberg stated that amending the ordinance is an option.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 2022-02, A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF PLYMOUTH, NORTH CAROLINA, ACCEPTING A BID AND APPROVING THE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 111 EAST MAIN STREET, PLYMOUTH, NORTH CAROLINA

Mayor Hawkins asked Interim Town Manager Layton to address this issue. Interim Town Manager Layton recapped that the Town Council authorized the sale of real property located at 111 East Main Street, which is jointly owned by the Town of Plymouth and Washington County, through an online bid process overseen by Washington County. A bid was received in the amount of \$27,722 and if the sale goes through, the Town will receive approximately \$11,455 from the disposition of the property. Councilwoman Byers made a motion to accept the bid for 111 East Main Street, Resolution 2022-02 with a second by Councilman Wobbleton. A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed 5-0.

X. TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mayor Hawkins turned the floor over to Attorney Natalia Isenberg. Attorney Isenberg reported that she will be giving her report during the closed session as the information contained in her report is confidential.

XI. INTERIM TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

A. PORT OF PLYMOUTH HISTORY MUSEUM LEASE

Interim Town Manager Layton informed the Council that he was informed by Attorney Isenberg that as she was looking through some documents, the lease agreement between the Town and the Washington County Historical Society, Inc., for the Port of Plymouth Museum expired on October 31, 2021. He reported that he will be meeting with representatives from the Historical Society on January 12th to discuss the lease. Interim Town Manager Layton will work with Attorney Isenberg on a draft agreement to present to the Council at the next meeting so that Councilmembers can provide direction to staff.

B. TOWN HALL MEETING – JANUARY 11, 2022

Interim Town Manager Layton reported that unfortunately, due to concerns over COVID, the Town Hall Meeting was postponed. He then asked if Council would be ready to provide a date. Councilwoman Teel suggested that we continue to monitor the numbers, so that a hybrid meeting can be held at another date. Interim Town Manager Layton stated that he has touched base with Allison Platt and she indicated that there is still some work that she can do prior to the Town Hall Meeting. He will speak with her again in regard to the timeline of the contract. After further discussion, it was the general consensus of the Council that a hybrid meeting be rescheduled.

XII. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

Mayor Hawkins asked if any members of the Council would like to make an announcement. Mayor Pro Tempore Brooks made a personal announcement pertaining to her health. As an elected official she stated that she wanted to share the information with her constituents and reported that she can continue her duties as a member of Council. She asked for prayer as well. Mayor Hawkins asked that the citizens continue to be careful and mindful of COVID-19.

XIII. CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Councilman Wobbleton with a second by Councilwoman Teel to enter into closed session under §143-318-11(a) (1) to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged (closed session minutes); and §143-318-11(a) (3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged; and §143-318.11(a) (4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body. A motion was made by Councilwoman Williams to exit closed session with a second by Councilman Wobbleton. A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed 5-0.

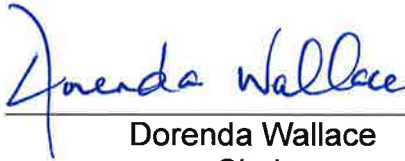
XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Upon return from closed session, Councilman Arnold did not re-join the open session; however, he was not excused from the meeting. A motion was made by Councilwoman Wobbleton to approve the December 13, 2021 Closed Session Minutes with a second by Councilwoman Teel. A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed 6-0. There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilwoman Byers with a second by Councilwoman Williams to adjourn the meeting. A roll call vote was taken. The Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Vershumn "Shawn" Hawkins
Mayor



Dorenda Wallace
Clerk